

Writing in Early Modern Portraiture (New Orleans, 1-4 Apr 10)

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American Comparative Literature Association 2010:
"Creoles, Diasporas, Cosmopolitanisms" in New Orleans,
April 1-4, 2010

Seminar: Writing in Early Modern Portraiture
Organizer: Erika Boeckeler, Kenyon College

The rise of the printing press in the mid-fifteenth century sparked a pan-European conversation on the visual appearance of alphabetic letters. Concerning themselves with fonts and calligraphy, authors of manuals recruited Renaissance developments in mathematics and the visual arts to fashion their letterforms. Many of these authors were also visual artists skilled in multiple media, such as Geofroy Tory in France and Albrecht Dürer in Germany; many more visual artists who did not explicitly theorize letterforms did create artistic alphabets, including figured alphabets and anthropomorphic woodcut initials. How do these conversations about what writing should look like seep into conversations about what people should look like? This panel investigates the relationship between the painted word and the painted image in early modern portraiture. Where do the two mix, and where are they at odds with each other within painted human identities?

Topics may include:

- multiple scripts and their purposes within a portrait
- interaction of painted signatures with images, particularly in self-portraiture
- separate (or not) planes of writing and other images
- changes in writing conventions within portraiture over time
- spillovers of painted writing into book arts? especially frontispiece portraiture? and vice versa
- painted calligraphy vs. typeface; calligraphic bodies
- media and color of writing
- alternative surfaces for portraiture and writing
- painted writing as it creates its own raised or indented surfaces
- the "creolization" of words and images in the production of the exotic
- composite grammars of grapho-linguistic mixtures

- acrophonic images

Participants need not be registered members of the ACLA to submit a paper proposal. The deadline is November 13, 2009. You will find directions for submission at:

http://www.acla.org/acla2010/?page_id=6

Reference:

CFP: Writing in Early Modern Portraiture (New Orleans, 1-4 Apr 10). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 9, 2009 (accessed Apr 19, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/32062>>.